

## IN BRIEF

**Over 800,000 mobile users visit social si**

Some 810,000 of UK mobile phone subscribers visited a social network on their mobile the first quarter of 2008. This number accounts for 1.7% of mobile subscribers, according to research firm Nielsen Mobile. Facebook was the most popular social network, with 557,000 unique mobile users, followed by MySpace with 211,000.

**Use of auction sites in web households drops**

The number of internet households that use auction sites has dropped four percentage points to 54% over the past six months. The data from Point Topic also found the proportion of people shopping online, which was recorded at 69% in January 2008, has remained static over the past 18 months.

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# Customers favour going online when looking for home insurance

BY SUZANNE BEARNE

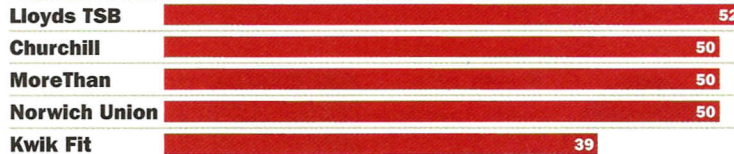
CUSTOMERS prefer to research home insurance online above any other channel, according to new research.

The study by customer experience benchmarking company Global Reviews found more than half (53%) of consumers who have researched home insurance browse individual insurance sites, 41% use a search engine to find providers and 29% visit a comparison site. But just 22% research over the phone.

Global Reviews asked more than 1,000 home insurance customers how they select their insurance, the role the internet plays in the process and what information and service they would like their provider to offer.

The research also rated the leading websites across the industry to create a benchmark of best practice

## INSURANCE PROVIDER WEBSITE QUALITY (%)



Source: Global Reviews

against different criteria, including customer support, prospective customer information, online application and site utility.

Additionally, the sites of 11 of the UK's leading providers were assessed, including Lloyds TSB, Directline, Churchill and Norwich Union.

Lloyds TSB was found to offer the best overall home insurance site, scoring 52% against Global Reviews'

benchmark, followed by Churchill, MoreThan and Norwich Union on 50%.

The AA and Nationwide scored the same as the industry average, 47%, followed by Saga (44%), Zurich (41%) and Kwik Fit (39%).

Global Reviews director Adam Goodvach said, "Home insurance sites put a great emphasis on signing people up, but neglect those who have additional queries."